



On Butterfly Wings

Beautiful, Vibrant, Wonderful You



How Journals Become Your BFF

Lori Bateman

I still remember my very first diary. I received it as a present at my 10th birthday party. I didn't really know what to do with it to be honest, until I picked it up one day and started filling in the dates, with things like "Today I went bike riding with Maria, we went to the park". After I finished that diary, I decided to get another one. There was something I liked about finishing each day with a note and a bit of reflection.

As I grew older and into my teens, my diary became my trusted friend and outlet for so much that was going on in my life at the time, which was a lot. Every area was a struggle as I attempted to navigate my way through my seemingly "normal life". I appeared to have it all together on the outside, meanwhile I was dealing with many different situations that were beyond what my young self knew how to handle.

My mom remarried a man with older teen children who resented me because I lived with their dad and they stayed with their mom. There was constant arguing about money and stress about who got more, and I was often caught in the middle. I got involved in sex way too young and was in over my head with boys and situations that I didn't understand. I did drugs, drank and hung out with older kids and got in trouble at school.

As a young girl, dealing with all of that was hard and it wasn't always easy to sort out my feelings, so my diaries were my place to escape to, to try and make sense of all that was happening in my life. I wrote about my frustrations and confusion with my family. I let out my anger when I felt like I didn't have a voice. I wrote about things I did with my friends. I filled page after page with heartbreak and tears over boys and break-ups. I wrestled with feelings of inadequacy and self-judgement and I poured out my feelings because I felt safe inside the pages of my diaries.

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As I grew up, my writing expanded to include my opinions and ideas as I developed new interests and explored new horizons. I've learned so much about myself; what interests me, my strengths and weaknesses and what is important to me. I've used my journals to ponder when I am uncertain and to celebrate when I feel accomplished. My journals are always there for me to rant, release, reflect, question, ask for and receive guidance.

Some of the many benefits of journaling that I discovered:

- It gives me a private place to sort feelings;
- I can access my higher, wise self who often knows the answers when I don't;
- It's a place to release anger and frustration so it doesn't build and get carried into other areas of my life;
- The quiet reflective time opens creative channels where ideas can flow from.

I've gotten so much from journaling over the years that I decided to teach others how to journal. I have also created a business, called "Open Heart Journals", to teach workshops on how to deepen your relationships by writing journals as acknowledgement gifts to loved ones.

I highly recommend that you give journaling a try. The process is empowering and supportive and can be one of your most trusting and best of friends (forever!).



I Jumped Anyway

Emily Savage

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In September 2012 I withdrew from my Masters' program. I know, I know, #firstworldproblems. It's not like I'd had problems in school, I already had an undergraduate degree in my pocket and I'd managed to get into grad school in the first place – but to me, it was one of the biggest, most terrifying decisions I'd ever made.

Growing up, I was always the smart one. I'm the first of three, where my latter two siblings are more attractive, more personable, and definitely have less social anxiety than I do. I hid in books, in academics. I was a straight-A student – we don't talk about my C in grade 11 math – and never got into trouble because I was too busy with homework. On top of that, I've always been particularly stubborn and giving up was never an option. It was a failure. Add to that my family's belief that I was either going to end up a partner in a law firm or running the United Nations and well... Needless to say in the midst of writing my thesis, withdrawing just never seemed like a viable option.

At the time, disappointing my family was emotionally crippling – my mother actually told me if I dropped out of my MA she would be so incredibly disappointed in me. The feeling of being unable to make it in grad school was absolutely devastating. I was sure that withdrawing – dropping out, as I often saw it – would shatter everything I'd worked very hard to be. After all, what kind of "smart one" can't hack school?

I'll save you the waxing poetic about putting yourself first and doing what's best for you above all else, because that's a discussion for another issue. This is about risk. This is about making a decision that I needed to make for me, yes, but a decision that also forced me to all but start my life from scratch in an area I'd set a precedent for having all of my ducks in a row. Very suddenly, that wasn't the case. I had no employment to fall back on, a spotty employment history and the very emotional sting of failure. I took a huge risk, a risk that could have undermined 22 years of development and knocked me back in my sense of self.

But here's the thing: it's now three years later and I don't regret that decision for even a split second. International law was intensely interesting, but I can say with the utmost clarity that what I'm doing now is infinitely more rewarding. So despite the fact that I totally disappointed my family – my father still asks when I'm going to finish my thesis – and despite my own feelings of worthlessness that still crop up to this day I can honestly say withdrawing from grad school continues to be the best decision I've ever made. I've been a nanny, I've done office work, I did a 4-month certificate in publishing and I discovered just how much I love working with social media platforms and blogging, all because I took a terrifying chance.

I am stronger in myself and what I want. I don't compromise anymore. When it comes to my professional life, I try and push myself harder because now I know it can pay off. I am happier now than I was during the two years of my MA. I'm doing something different, something I fell into, something I adore. Because I took a chance, a terrifying risk. So even though my family is still disappointed in me – I'm not doing anything close to law or the UN – I am happy. More than that, though, I'm proud of myself. I'm proud of what I've accomplished. Above all that, I've learned that the "perfect smart one" doesn't always have to be perfect after all.

Courage is simply the willingness to be afraid and act anyway.

Dr. Robert Anthony

"The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me."

-Ayn Rand

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Two Bs

Danielle Campagnolo

When I tell people "I can't think of anything to write", I'm usually lying. What I really mean is I'm scared to. I know, I know, 21st century teen, we aren't supposed to be fazed by anything; we are supposed to take everything in stride with flamboyant phrases like "whatever".

Well, in that case, "whatever" the case, I'm flat out terrified. Scared that when a spark ignites in my chest and an electrical current shoots down my arm to my very fingertips that it isn't some fatal stroke--it's something worse--a different kind of heart attack. One that carries on through my fingertips into a chewed-to-hell pen and waits like lightning prepared to strike, and I'm scared it won't just be the paper it sears into. I'm scared of letting my own words out there and having them cut me open, dissecting each of my vital organs and snipping the fibers that hold them in place in order to analyse them up close and then be disappointed in their findings.

I'm mostly scared of slicing out my heart and placing it on a pedestal, a stage it doesn't deserve. I mean, who would pay money to see something that's broken? But broken seems like the only thing I have to offer when I do let the lightning carve into me and around all of my secrets and fears and regrets, straight to the root of them all--which the perfectionist in me hasn't learned to love yet (but hey--give me some time, haven't been here all too long). The fact is: I am broken. Always have been, always will be. But it always leads me to thinking, what can't break? Bones break, minds break, waves break, horses are broken, there are broken promises. Trust. Friendship. People. And of course the "L" word. It can break too. Believe me, I know.

And right when my train of thought begins to spin out of control and I can't take it anymore I break the silence too and shout "STOP!" because as I dwell on a graveyard full of all the things that can't last forever, a voice whispers "look around". So I do, and I see light. Colour. Laughter, smiles and life! I may be broken, but I'm here. And sure, some of the things I'm seeing may not last forever but they are here for now. They are the gift, the present. And even though the past was bruised and battered, you were meant to be healed again. Maybe not right back to your perfect innocent state before the breaking and bruising began, but you were healed all the same. Somewhere along the line someone felt you were worth saving. And so I look out and I start a different train of thought running. This time about how maybe broken really means beautiful.

Broken people have written books, poetry, songs. Broken people have built buildings, cities and entire empires. Broken people made art, made history, made a beautiful baby. Broken people hope that child will never have to grow up and know what it feels like to be broken, too. But it will, and when she does, an entire broken nation will hope that one day when a little girl looks into the mirror, she will look past the broken, and that she will only see beautiful.

And so, for now I hope. Hope that though I'm scared, I keep letting that lightning strike me. So that I strike my pen which strikes my heart before striking a page which causes someone somewhere to strike up a vibration we call voice, and speak words, shaking words, but spoken words that strike your hearts, too. So we can all be as scared as I am to stand here against the world, but be comforted in that fact that we've all been scared out of our minds before; been as cut open and bare as I feel, but been sewn together and healed back up again, realizing that being broken and beautiful together is what will save us in the end.



Who We Are



Emily Savage

Managing Editor

Emily is a university graduate still looking for her place in the universe. She is also apparently a fan of dating clichés and romantic turns of phrase. She's been writing for longer than she'd like to count. You can follow her on Twitter (@esavage3) where she mostly posts about her love affair with books.

Heather Embree

Articles Editor

Heather is a metaphysical healer and soul intuitive practitioner in Guelph, Ontario. She has been a regular writer and editor of various genres over the past 15 years, as well as a human and earth rights activist. For more information visit www.blossomingheart.ca.



Lisa Browning

Publisher

Lisa is the publisher of One Thousand Trees, a monthly online magazine devoted to facilitating wellness through connection, creativity and community service. She also offers writing, editing, and publishing/pre-press services, and has recently launched a children's book division called Saplings. She is inspired to make a difference in this world, and to help others realize their passion and their gifts. For more information visit www.onethousandtrees.com.



Lori Bateman

How Journals Become Your BFF

Lori Bateman is a relationship coach, author, inspirational speaker and founder of "Open Heart Journals". Through Lori's powerful heart connecting process, she teaches how to create genuine, one of a kind, gifts of acknowledgement that have the power to transform relationships to a whole new level. To learn more and receive your Free e-book, "How to Write a Journal in 3 Easy Steps!" visit www.openheartjournals.com. Follow Lori on Twitter at @ohjournals, and Facebook at Open Heart Journals.





Ask the Expert

Is there something in your life that's been nagging you for a while but you're not quite sure who to talk to?

In each issue we'll be taking your questions and asking an expert, publishing their responses in the next issue.

Submit your questions to:
butterflies@onethousandtrees.com

Next Issue

Giving Back

Giving back takes so many forms. We want to hear about the last time you did something for someone else.

When was the last time you "gave back"? When was the last time you did something for someone just because? Was it volunteering for charity, or just listening to someone who felt alone?

Submit your stories!



Submission Guidelines

Are you Artistic?

Do you have an interest in writing?

Do you want to make the most of your life?

"On Butterfly Wings" is a newsletter for girls. We are always looking for artistic submissions our audience expressing the issues that girls go through. Our vision is to empower girls to become strong and confident, and to create a safe place where they feel free to express themselves.

Submit your art, your poetry, your writing by emailing your work to butterflies@onethousandtrees.com

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